



## Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

235 Promenade Street | Providence, RI 02908 | 401.222.4700 | [www.dem.ri.gov](http://www.dem.ri.gov) | @RhodeIslandDEM

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friday, July 26, 2019

**CONTACT:** Mike Healey, DEM: 401-258-0787

[Michael.Healey@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Michael.Healey@dem.ri.gov)

Annemarie Beardsworth: 401-641-8726

[A.Beardsworth@health.ri.gov](mailto:A.Beardsworth@health.ri.gov)

## DEM, RIDOH ANNOUNCE IMMEDIATE CLOSURE OF WINNAPAug POND TO SHELLFISHING DUE TO HIGH BACTERIAL COUNT

*The agencies also advise that any shellfish harvested from the pond since Tuesday, July 23, be thrown away.*

PROVIDENCE – The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) are announcing that effective immediately, all waters of Winnapaug Pond in Charlestown and Westerly are closed to shellfishing until further notice.

The agencies are enacting the closure because water samples collected on Wednesday, July 24, had unsafe bacteria levels. The results of these samples were received late today. The high bacteria levels are likely due to stormwater runoff from the more than three inches of rain that fell on Monday, July 22, and Tuesday, July 23, across the state. RIDOH has initiated a recall of shellfish commercially harvested (wild or farmed) from Winnapaug Pond on or after Tuesday and is advising that any shellfish harvested recreationally be thrown away immediately.

Shellfish from water with high bacteria levels could result in gastroenteritis, RIDOH advises. The symptoms of gastroenteritis could include nausea, vomiting, stomachache, diarrhea, headache, and fever. It can be a serious health concern for young children, the elderly, and people with compromised immune systems.

DEM is planning to collect additional water samples on Monday and will update this announcement as circumstances warrant.

Follow DEM on Twitter ([@RhodeIslandDEM](https://twitter.com/RhodeIslandDEM)) or [Facebook](#) and follow RIDOH on Twitter ([@RIHEALTH](https://twitter.com/RIHEALTH)) or [Facebook](#) for information and timely updates.

###